

PROCEEDINGS  
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THE THIRD SPECIMEN OF *ELAPHE ROSACEA*  
(COPE).

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In 1888 Cope described *Coluber rosaceus*, the type specimen coming from Key West (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 388). As a Copeian species, based on a single specimen, it was disregarded, more or less, until, more than thirty years later, the second example was found, on Big Pine Key. Barbour, into whose hand this came, was as much impressed with the animal as Cope had been and promptly resurrected the species, now *Elaphe rosacea* (Copeia, No. 84, 1920, p. 68). Since then many visitors to the Lower Florida Keys, myself among them, have searched in vain for this striking snake. I now have before me the third specimen, alive, and have compared it with *Elaphe guttata*, the widespread form whose range includes the area in which *rosacea* may be found. I am indebted to Messrs. R. F. Deckert and Al. Pflueger, of Miami, Fla., for the privilege of examining this specimen. It was collected by Mr. Pflueger on Little Pine Key. The species apparently still survives on the few isolated Keys which support hammocks.

Color, rather than scalation and the pattern of the markings, will enable *rosacea* to be differentiated from *guttata*. The ground color of *rosacea* is a dark plumbeous in contrast to the light buff of *guttata*. The dorsal saddles, lightest anteriorly, are a darker red flecked with orange, differing from the even vermilion of the *guttata* saddles. The square black ventral spots are much the less distinct in *rosacea* which has the posterior two-thirds of the venter a bright orange, contrasting with the white ventral ground color of *guttata*. The species is characterized by the presence of four dark longitudinal stripes, a lateral and a median-dorsal pair. In the present specimen these stripes vary in intensity, being most pronounced immediately after

sloughing of the skin. Since *guttata* has been known to bear, occasionally, similar stripes, the character is not infallible.

Finally, preservation of *rosacea* is accompanied by marked fading of the red pigment of the saddles and lateral spots, as well as the longitudinal stripes. The dark dorsal ground color, however, remains quite pronounced—even in the type, after nearly half a century. This is quite the opposite from the case of *guttata*, in which the red pigmented areas remain well defined.